

Wycombe W. share points with a speedy Ilford

Sports Mail Special Report

WYCOMBE WAN. 2 : ILFORD 2

A GOAL down within ten minutes, Wycombe Wanderers were often forced onto the defensive by a fast-moving Ilford forward line in their Isthmian League game at High Wycombe, and the home forwards made little impression on a sound visiting defence.

Wycombe Wanderers: Brown; Beck, Lewis; Thomas, Fisher, Gale; Worley, Holmes, James, Pullin, Horseman.

Ilford: Barr; Neale, Auger; Farmer, Bullman, Dodkins; Hanley, Rutter, Christmas, Jackson, Whittall.

Referee: R. Pearce (Brentwood, Essex).

After a brisk start Ilford were the first to get in a shot when Rutter tested Brown, but when Wycombe swung into the attack Thomas was a little unlucky with a rising shot which scraped the crossbar after clever play by Worley and Holmes.

Ilford, however, took the lead after ten minutes when centre half Fisher, attempting a clearance and knocked out in a collision with the Ilford inside left, Jackson, diverted the ball past Brown into his own goal. Fisher was able to resume after treatment on the field.

Subsequently the Wycombe defence looked very shaky in face of speedy assaults by the Ilford forwards, and they were lucky to escape when a lob from Jackson dropped just over the crossbar.

Wycombe's nearest attempts came from Worley, often prominent on the right wing. Once he broke through and brought Barr to his knees with a crashing drive.

Seven minutes before half-time CHRISTMAS increased Ilford's lead when he broke through on his own, but as Wycombe rallied again WORLEY reduced the arrears with a fine shot direct from a corner kick.

Half-time: Wycombe Wanderers 1, Ilford 2.

Wycombe were a good deal more prominent early in the second half and both Holmes and James tested Barr before a well-deserved equaliser came 16 minutes after the resumption from JAMES, who crashed the ball into the roof of the net from point-blank range.

When Ilford hit back again, however, Wycombe had two narrow escapes, once when a shot by Jackson hit the upright and ran across the goal-line before going out and again when a shot by Christmas stunned goalkeeper Brown and a second attempt went just over the crossbar.

The last ten minutes produced a ding-dong struggle at top pace but neither forward line was able to pierce close-packed defences although Christmas once hit the upright for Ilford.

RESULT:

WYCOMBE WANDERERS 2
ILFORD 2

Wycombe 2 Ilford 2

A SHOCK goal for Ilford in the opening minutes at Wycombe upset Wanderers' usually sound defence.

The goal came when centre-half Fisher was knocked out in a head-on collision with inside-left Jackson. Attempting a clearance, left-back Lewis diverted the ball into his own goal.

Alf Christmas, centre forward, increased the lead, seven minutes before half-time, but skipper Len Worley promptly kept the Wanderers in the fight with a brilliant goal direct from a corner kick.

More confident in the second half, Wycombe equalised with a goal from centre forward James.